



***Mentor Michigan Census
Wave IV***

**Mentoring Organizations and Their
Partnerships and Collaborative Groups**

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Background

The Mentor Michigan Census (MMC) is a periodic, on-line survey of organizations operating mentoring programs in the State of Michigan. Wave I of the MMC was conducted in the fall of 2004, Wave II in March of 2005, and Wave III in October of 2005.

The most recent Wave, Wave IV, was conducted in September and October of 2006. Out of the 237 mentoring organizations identified and registered with Mentor Michigan, 137 responded (58% response rate).

Objectives

The primary purpose of the MMC is to understand the scope and nature of mentoring and mentoring organizations in Michigan. Specifically, there are three key objectives:

1. Identify, count, describe, and track mentoring organizations, programs, mentors, and the children served.
2. Understand program components, processes, resources, and needs.
3. Encourage and support program evaluation.

See the web site for reports that address these objectives. This report focuses solely on Wave IV questions regarding mentoring organizations' experiences with Partnerships and Collaboratives. Satisfaction with their memberships in these organizations, objectives achieved and suggestions for improvement are all addressed in this report.

Other reports generated from this and prior Wave's data can be found on the Michigan Mentor web site (www.michigan.gov/mentormichigan).

About Mentor Michigan's Partnerships

- Mentor Michigan encourages, and mentoring organizations are often closely involved with, many different partners (businesses, government agencies, schools, etc.). Partnerships are defined as any organizational relationship (short- or long-term) that supports youth mentoring. This support can be given in a variety of ways, some of which include providing in-kind services, assisting with recruiting, making training venues available and donating money, supplies or other resources. This section of the report addresses responding organization's relationships with these partners.

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Types and Numbers of Partnerships

- Sixty percent of responding organizations report that the number of partnerships they maintain has increased compared to 3 years ago; 5% report that the number has decreased, and 22% say that the number of partnerships has stayed the same.
- More than 1500 relationships between mentoring organizations and businesses exist throughout the state. This total number of relationships reflects 58% of organizations reporting that they have at least one relationship with a business partner.
- Seventy-seven percent of organizations report that they maintain at least one relationship with a school district, for a total of 496 throughout the state.
- Of the 137 reporting mentoring organizations, 55% have at least one relationship with a faith-based organization for a total of 1216 of these relationships throughout the state.
- Fifty-four percent of mentoring organizations report that they partner with other non-profits, and 66% form partnerships with funding sources.
- Nine percent of respondents report partnerships not listed in the table below. These include day care centers, camps, art centers and fraternities.

**Percentage of Organizations with Partnerships
by Type of Partner**

Type of Partner	% of Organizations Having at Least One Partnership of This Type
School districts	77%
Funding sources	66
Universities/colleges	66
Mentoring collaboratives	62
Businesses	58
Faith-based organizations	55
Other non-profits	54
County agencies	47
Volunteer centers	47
State agencies	42
City/municipal agencies	41
Federal agencies	23
Other	9

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Total Number and Types of Partnerships Maintained By Mentoring Organizations

Type of Partner	Total Number of Relationships
Businesses	1555
Faith-based organizations	1216
Other non-profits	662
Funding sources	660
School districts	496
Other	369
Universities/colleges	244
County agencies	187
Mentoring collaboratives	174
City/municipal agencies	127
Volunteer centers	129
State agencies	103
Federal agencies	66

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Satisfaction with Partnerships

- Overall satisfaction with partnerships is high among mentoring organizations. Ninety-three percent are either “very” or “somewhat satisfied”. Only 1% are “not very satisfied”, 1% are unaware of the partnership benefits, and 5% “don’t know”.



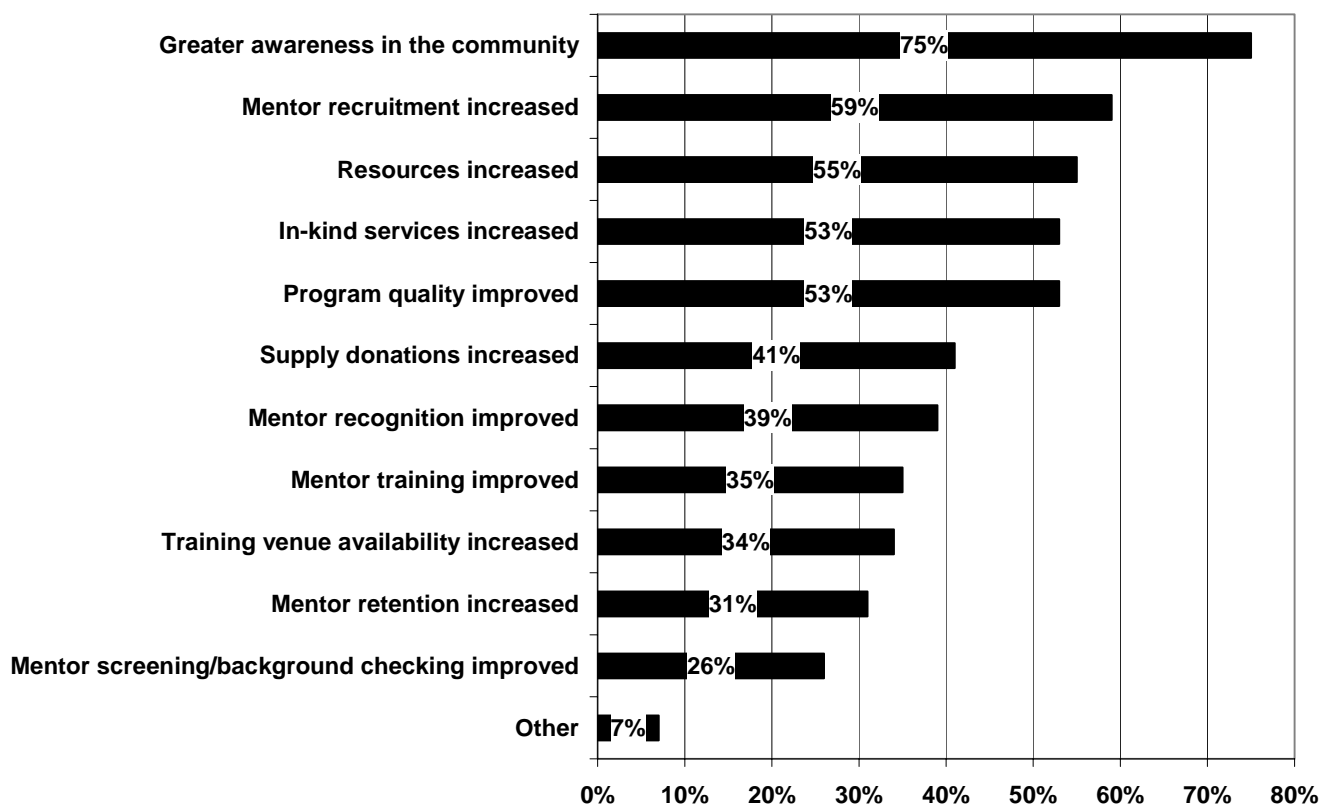
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Benefits / Outcomes of Partnerships

- The biggest benefit of maintaining partnerships cited by these mentoring organizations (75%) is a greater awareness in the community. More than half also cite increased mentor recruitment (59%), increased resources (55%), increased in-kind services (53%) and improvements to program quality (53%).
- Forty-one percent of respondents report that supply donations have increased (41%) and mentor recognition and training has improved (39% and 35% respectively) as a result of these partnerships. Many also note an increase in training venue availability (34%) and increased mentor retention (31%).
- More than a quarter of respondents report that as a result of maintaining partnerships they have improved mentor background checking and screening (26%).
- Respondents also attribute increased scholarships and a greater number of mentoring programs to their partnerships in the community.

Benefits/Outcomes of Partnerships

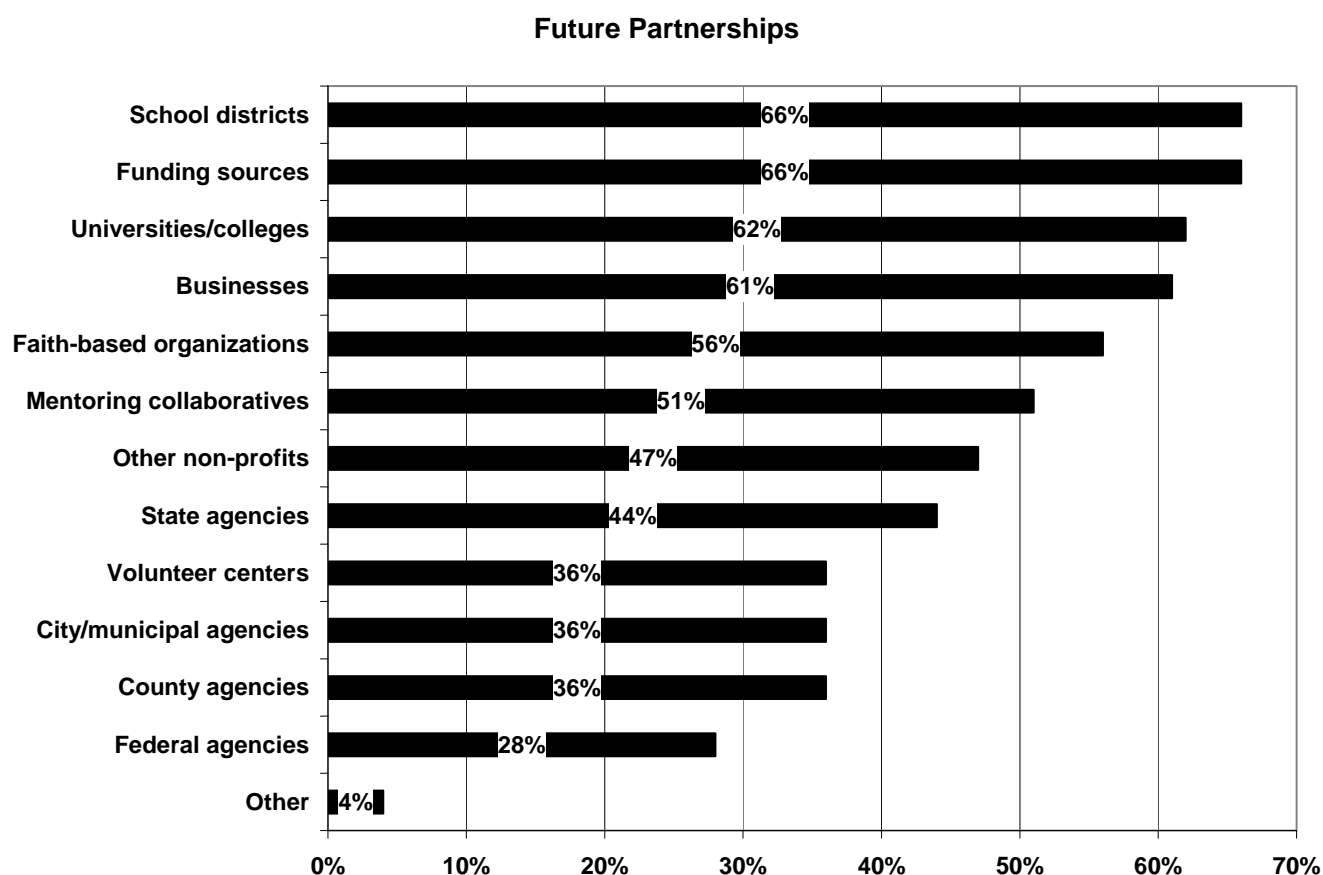


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Looking Forward: Most Important / Beneficial Partnerships

- In the future, mentoring organizations envision school districts and funding sources (each 66%) as being the most important and beneficial type of partnerships to maintain. This illustrates the need to reinforce excellent collaborations with school districts. Following school districts and funding sources, universities and colleges (62%) and businesses (61%) are identified by respondents as being important sources of partnerships.
- More than half of respondents also list faith-based organizations (56%) and mentoring collaboratives (51%) as important to their plans and strategies for the future.
- Partnerships with other non-profits (47%) and state agencies (44%) are important to survey respondents. More than a third of respondents list volunteer centers, city/municipal agencies and county agencies (all 36%) as being integral to their future.
- Given a list of possible partnerships from which to choose, more than a quarter (28%) of respondents identified federal agencies as important, though this was the least of all sources tested.



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Membership in Collaboratives

- There are at least 15 mentoring collaboratives within the state known to Mentor Michigan. This section of the report presents data on mentoring organizations' involvement with these collaboratives
- Half of the state's mentoring organizations report that they are members of collaboratives.
- In addition to the fifteen collaboratives listed in the table below, organizations report memberships in the Barry County Collaborative, Mentor Tuscola, Mentoring Resource Partnership, Michigan State University Extension 4-H, Crawford County Collaborative, Mecosta and Ionia Counties Collaborative, and Kalamazoo Communities in Schools Foundation.

Collaborative Name	# Member Organizations	%
Metro Detroit Mentor Collaboration (MDMC)	20	15%
Ottawa County Mentoring Collaborative	10	7
Other	10	7
Kent County Mentoring Collaborative	8	6
Mentoring Roundtable of Southwest Michigan	5	4
Allegan County Mentoring Partnership	4	3
Genesee County Michigan State University Extension	3	2
St. Joseph County Human Services Commission – Mentoring Taskforce	3	2
Washtenaw Youth Mentoring Coalition	3	2
Mid-Michigan Mentoring Collaborative	2	1
Montcalm County Mentoring Roundtable	2	1
Wayne County Youth Assistance Programs	2	1
Wexford/Missaukee Mentoring Coalition	2	1
Marquette Mentor Michigan Taskforce	1	1
Mentoring Collaborative of Jackson County	1	1
Van Buren Mentoring Roundtable	1	1

Length of Membership

- Most mentoring organizations that are members of collaboratives report that they have been members for three years or less. A few note longer members of up to ten years, with one claiming membership since 1990.
- A few respondents note in their comments that they are a “founding member” or have been members “since their inception.”

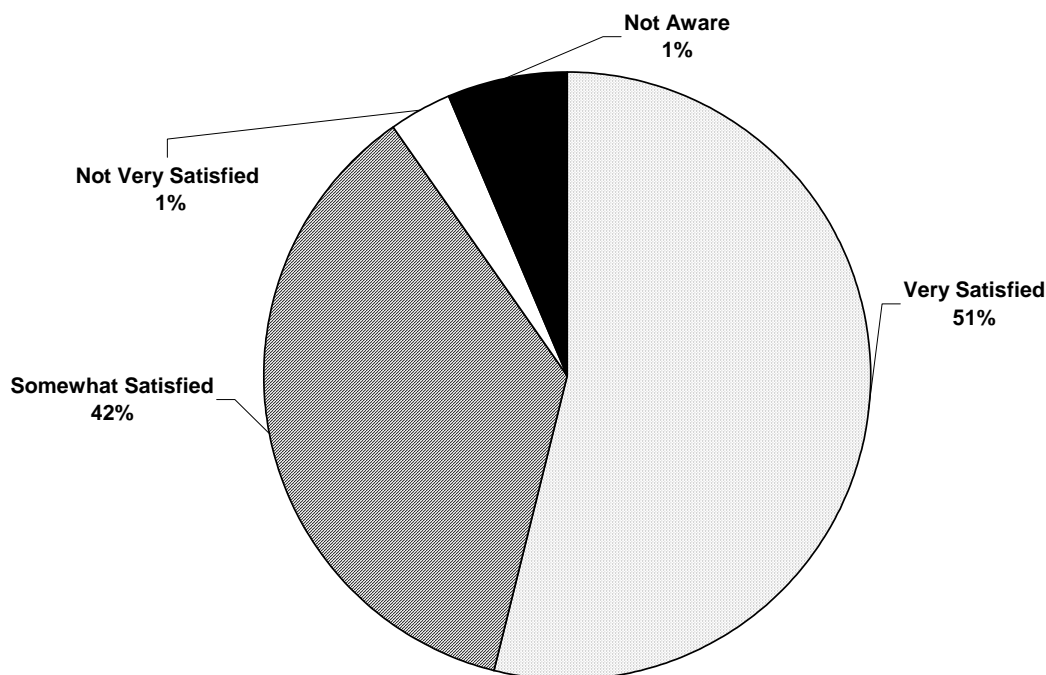
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Satisfaction with Collaboratives

- Most collaboratives throughout the state are relatively new and need additional support and structure to prosper. This is perhaps why satisfaction with these groups is not currently as high as one might hope. That said, satisfaction with the benefits of being members of their collaboratives is relatively high considering their newness and lack of funding. Fifty-one percent report being “very” satisfied and another 42% are “somewhat” satisfied. Only 1% is not satisfied with their collaborative, 1% not aware of the benefits of collaborative membership, and 5% “don’t know”.

Mentoring Organizations' Satisfaction with Collaboratives



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The Whys and Why Nots of Collaborative Membership

Reasons for Membership

- **Support, networking and information sharing** appear to be the reasons why most mentoring organizations join and participate in the activities of collaboratives. Most collaborative members cite the value of a shared mission. They identify sharing each others' experiences and learning from them as a major benefit. Several also note that working together positively impacts the individuals they serve as well as enhances their own professional growth and job satisfaction.

"We work very hard to stay informed and help each other run and operate the best mentoring programs we can. More ideas are better than one."

"To share resources, build capacity, partner with other community agencies, to help make them and us stronger."

"Because of the importance of supporting mentoring programs, networking/resources, mentor support, recruitment, recognition, all increasing organizational capacity to better serve the youth we are working with. No one organization can do it all, so if we work together we can impact more youth and be of greater help to the community as a whole."

"It allows us to reach many more families and children outside our four walls."

"Mentoring Collaboratives provide us with a better connection with the community."

"It is a wonderful group of people that come with many great ideas in regards to enhancing Mentorship Programs. It is wonderful to be able to collaborate with other programs and share ideas. "

"It is wonderful to network with other like minded and service oriented agencies to gain insight, ideas, meet new people and develop friendships."

- One survey respondent notes that their organization sees collaborative membership as an obligation to give other organizations a helping hand.

"As the premiere mentoring organization in the nation, we feel an obligation to assist other, local mentoring providers."

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Reasons Why Organizations are Not Collaborative Members

- **Being unaware of and a lack of access to local collaboratives** are the major reasons respondents list for not being members of a collaborative. For several, it seems that the questions on the MMC brought the existence of these collaboratives to their attention for the first time. For a few others, a lack of an invitation seems to be the impediment to membership.

“Not aware of collaboratives.”

“None in our area.”

“(There is) not a collaborative in the county.”

“Was not aware there was one in Mid-Michigan.”

“There did not appear to be any in our council's jurisdiction.”

“Just learned of these resources.”

“This is a new mentoring program. We have not had the opportunity to attend Michigan's Mentoring Conference and we were not aware of this opportunity.”

“I have not been invited to become a member.”

- **Limited personnel and resources** are cited by some respondents as reasons for not joining a collaborative. Several others indicate that they intend to join, but **just haven't gotten around to it yet**.

“Too busy.”

“Limited personnel and resources.”

“After attending the Governor's symposium we obtained information about the collaboratives in this area. We have not applied but plan to in the near future.”

“The program is new this year and the director has not had an opportunity to join a collaborative.”

“An AmeriCorps worker initiated a Mentoring Collaborative for St. Clair County thru MSU Extension Offices in 04/05. It was only off the ground for a few months when that volunteer's assignment was over. Another person was selected in her place. She was no longer in the position after a couple of months. To my knowledge, the position was not replaced and the group has not continued.”

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- Their local collaborative's **lack of relevance** to their particular organization, an **inability to meet their needs**, and **prohibitive membership criteria** are listed by some respondents as reasons they do not join a collaborative.

"We are an adult mentoring program in addition to serving youth. A majority of the information and resources from other mentoring programs are specific to youth alone."

"MDMC did not provide flexibility to attend workshops and meetings. A collaborative must meet the needs of organizations it claims to work with within the designated geographic area it serves and those agencies should have an option of full or partial memberships."

"Our particular situation precludes partnering with collaboratives set in the private sector. Public education finds itself in a unique position among other mentor organizations in that we deal with a specific target population (freshman and new transfer students), do so with peer mentors (with adult supervision) and pursue no mentor vetting process."

"In the past we were a member of MDMC, but the criteria for maintaining membership were prohibitive."

- Finally, a few respondents state that they **see no need to join a collaborative**.

"Currently don't see the need and don't know of any available."

"There is no reason to become a member."

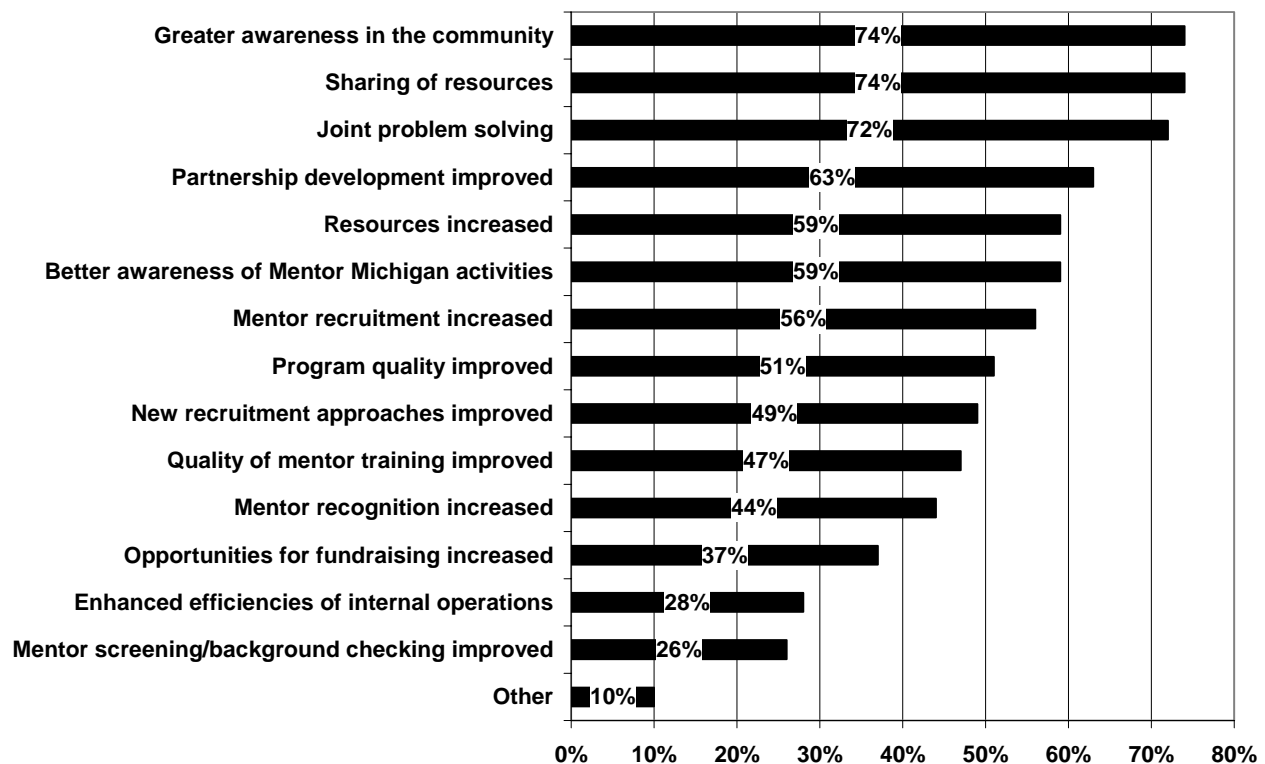
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Benefits of Collaboratives

- Almost three quarters of collaborative members list “greater awareness in the community” and “sharing of resources” as the top benefit (74%) to membership, followed closely by “joint problem solving” (72%).
- More than half also list “partnership development improved” (63%), “resources increased” (59%), better awareness of Mentor Michigan activities (59%), “mentor recruitment increased” (56%) and “program quality improved” (51%).

Benefits of Membership in a Collaborative



- Asked to describe in their own words the benefits their organizations receive from collaborative participation, these respondents echo the findings above. **Greater community awareness, joint problem solving and sharing of resources** are most often cited benefits.

“Our organization benefits from the sharing of information and exchange of ideas.”

“Because of this organization we have presence in a community that might otherwise be difficult for us to service due to the culture of the community residents.”

“We work as a group to raise the awareness of mentoring in our community.”

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"The agencies know what everyone is doing. They see the value of supporting one another. When my 4-H Council decided not to continue funding a VISTA, the other partners worked on a fund raiser to get the needed money."

"By forming and participating in the Mentor Tuscola mentoring collaboration our agency has coordinated mentor recruitment activities and raised community awareness of mentoring services available and the urgent need for mentors."

"The Collaborative has given all its member information that aid us greatly in problem solving, financing our program, legal issues regarding mentoring program, networking with other agencies, and awareness of other agencies that are serving youth. Great resources."

"Increased community awareness, greater marketing opportunities, access to best practice information, and opportunities to brainstorm issues with other local programs. In addition, the written and verbal support provided by the collaborative has increased our programs reputation in the community."

- Practical assistance with **increasing mentor recruitment, training and retention** are mentioned by many respondents as important benefits of their participation in collaboratives. They also credit the collaboratives with providing information about **partnerships, fundraising, and structuring of programs.**

"Benefits include learning new ways to increase mentor retention and match longevity. The Collaborative has also been helpful regarding new mentor training as well as giving matches the opportunity to participate in activities with other BBBS matches and matches from other programs. The number and quality of the activities would not be possible without the Collaborative."

"Training opportunities is the most important to me."

"Increased mentor recruitment. Shared information about background checks and training. Shared coordination and hosting of events for youth. Shared information about Mentor Michigan opportunities."

"Our two biggest fundraisers of the year... would not be possible without the Ottawa County Mentoring Coalition. We would also not be able to provide our mentors with the quantity and quality of activities and continued trainings and in-services. We also have access to partnerships that might not be possible with a single, smaller agency or program."

"The collaborative allows our program which had almost become defunct to be able to restructure as we are doing now in order to provide mentoring to children in foster care who were previously overlooked. The collaborative has been helpful in rebuilding the higher-horizons program as the rebuilding continues."

"Cross referrals of mentors; match activities through ticket donations, etc.; annual mentor recognition dinner; in-kind donations."

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Looking Forward: Collaborative Needs

- “More” is the operative word many respondents use when describing what they need from their collaborative membership in the future. There is a sense that the collaboratives are offering the right types of support, but need to increase the amount of that support. **More funding, more partnerships, and more training** lead the list of priorities for these respondents. In addition, Michigan's mentoring organizations want **more involvement and input** from other agencies.

“More funding!”

“More business partnerships – sponsors.”

“More consistent training schedule, commitment from members.”

“More support, better communication.”

“We need more promotion of our specific agency/program. The collaborative works with many programs, and I believe some get lost, forgotten, or not marketed as heavily.”

“The more contacts we make and the more knowledge of resources the more beneficial our program will be.”

“Less training and more round table discussions”

“More relevant trainings.”

“More input from the other programs versus them just coming and wanting everything planned for them.”

“It would be good to get more agencies involved.”

- Practical support in the form of funding for and assistance with various aspects of running a mentoring program is desired by some survey respondents. Specifically, they need **help with recruitment, background checks, screening, training and grant writing**.

“Joint funding to assist with background checks/screenings and joint training at one site.”

“I would like to see collaboration on writing a grant that would benefit many organizations, and everyone would be able to pitch in to get it done, or other fundraising ideas and partnerships.”

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“The opportunity to access fingerprint background checks (SafetyNet) as a group, rather than each individual program conducting their own, or not due to budgetary restraints. Greater assistance with mentor recruitment would also be helpful. “

“A central way of doing low-cost background checks.”

“A solid plan for recruitment, marketing, etc.”

- Additional needs cited by a few respondents include the creation of new collaboratives to **make it easier to attend meetings, more flexibility in the membership rules, and more information made available to mature organizations.**

“Right now we belong to a collaboration that is about an hour away and services Macomb/Oakland counties. It would be helpful if there was collaboration in the Downriver area (Wayne County).”

“Flexibility. Staff may not be available for all meetings and voluntary membership should have more than one level of participation.”

“Information for organizations with experience other than a startup.”

“An avenue for sharing resources; no monetary “fees” to be a member; no minimum number of tickets to sell at an event to maintain membership.”